

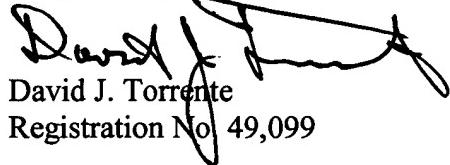
REMARKS

Claims 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13-15 and 17-20 are pending in the instant application. At the outset, Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13 and 17, and the allowance of claims 7, 14-15 and 18-20. In the Office Action, claims 1, 5, 8, 12 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,233,347 to Chen, et al. (hereinafter, "Chen"). Claims 3 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Chen in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,757,405 to Muratani, et al. (hereinafter, "Muratani").

As amended above, dependent claims 2, 6, 9, 13 and 17 are amended into independent form, including all features recited in their respective independent base claims. Claims 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 and 16 are cancelled without disclaimer or prejudice to their subsequent reintroduction in this or a continuing application.

In light of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims recite patentable subject matter, and kindly solicits an early indication of allowability of all claims. If the Examiner has any reservation in allowing the claims, and believes that a telephone interview would advance prosecution, they are kindly requested to telephone the undersigned at an earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,


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